each chapter we find a juxtaposition of quotations with intermittent running commentary but little analysis and penetration. After one has journeyed through a few of the chapters one realizes that the trip is always the same, only each time touching different bases, and the reading becomes a chore. The comments of the author say very much the same as the quotations, only with less force and insight, and at times are interspersed with pious or polemical remarks (for instance the pejorative "Romanism").

At certain points in his commentary the author's adrenalin seems to rise, his style loses some of its labored, rather dry and wooden expression and becomes somewhat lively and emphatic, though never exciting or brilliant. It is the reviewer's impression that this happens in the sections on the word (Bible), church, predestination (election), Holy Spirit and sanctification. Hardly aware of recent research in Luther's hermeneutics, Landeen comes close to Lutheran *bibliolatry* in his emphasis on the infallibility of the inspired book; underrating the dialectic of visible and invisible, he arrives at a strongly institutional understanding of the church, which is more like Melancthon than Luther; overplaying Luther on predestination, he almost makes him appear as advocating a limited atonement; failing to recognize the implications of the dialectic between instantaneous and growing sanctification, he overemphasizes the teaching on the Holy Spirit. Seen together, it appears that it is Lutheran orthodox stresses that are laid on Luther, who perhaps is amenable to such a perspective, but certainly allows also other points of view.

With quite a number of excellent books on Luther's thought available in English (like Althaus, Bornkamm, Ritter, Pinomaa, and above all Ebeling, who supplies most of what we find missing in Landeen), this reviewer finds himself in a quandary as to the usefulness of this book, even for general readers. Is it an unintentional mistake that Landeen does not list the *translations* into English of these authors just mentioned? It seems clear that his publication does not figure favorably in such company. Perhaps there is some redeeming value in the nice printing and get-up of his book, but even this is overshadowed by a bibliography with more than the tolerable number of uncorrected errors.

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Regin Preter. *Luther's Theology of the Cross*. Facet Books, Historical Series (Reformation) 17, Charles S. Anderson, Editor. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971. Pp. 24. \$1.

This is not, as one might infer from the title, a historical study of Luther's theology of the cross. And quite rightly so, for it would indeed require an ingenious effort to improve upon the definitive work on this subject by Walter von Loewenich, *Luthers Theologia Crucis*, which, by the way, never has been translated into English – an incomprehensible shortcoming considering the flood of lesser products swamping the North American market. Rather, Preter, who initially made his name by research in Luther's pneumatology, intends to show here the contemporary significance of Luther's theology of the cross as a dogmatic corrective against dangers on both sides.

After a brief description of Luther's theology of the cross in his lectures on *Hebrews* and his *Heidelberg Theses*, the systematician Preter analyzes its theological structure and iden-

tifies it as "the inseparable union between the cross of Christ and the cross which is laid upon us," as "a theology of word and faith" (5). By now it has become clear that the author wishes to play with the concepts of objective, historical actuality of salvation (word) and subjective, existential appropriation and experience of it (faith). Having thus ascertained a set of categories which as criteria can be imposed on a variety of phenomena in the history of theology, he is able to polemicize against a "theology of the cross without the word" and a "theology of the word without the cross" (5 ff.).

To be sure, Prenter is faintly aware that he simplifies complex issues to the point of becoming simplistic. Just the same, he boldly proceeds to identify the former with the medieval piety of an *imitatio Christi* mysticism and the latter with post-Lutheran orthodoxy where the "objective doctrine of the cross" is so much emphasized that faith turns out to be a mere "intellectual affirmation" (6). In modern times the same respective onesidedness is found – no surprise! – in the existentialist theology of Bultmann where "the entire stress is placed on whether or not the individual makes the cross of Christ his own" (10), and conversely in an all-pervasive Christological concentration of a Barthian type which, for instance, breaks church and state apart in a two-realm theory, or starkly contrasts history and history of salvation (14 ff.).

As a remedy for such aberrations, it is suggested that we see the theology of the cross in a trinitarian perspective, i.e., revealing and effecting our salvation by the three divine persons in the cross, as "providence, redemption and salvation" (13 ff.). Consequently, a course between the Scylla of medieval mysticism and the Charybdis of Lutheran scholasticism, a theology of word *and* faith between Bultmann and Barth is mapped out for Lutheran dogmatics – a view which, according to Prenter, is congruent with both Luther and the Scriptures.

What shall we say then? Our review copy is replete with critical marginal notes, and it would take perhaps as much as Prenter's text itself to voice one's discomfort with his stereotyping in order to demonstrate onesidedness on either side. The level of uneasiness is especially high when we see medieval ethics and Bultmann's thought twisted to provide straw-men to be burnt on the stake of orthodoxy. The only reason to let it go with that is perhaps that the Lutheran Church herself apparently needs that kind of polemical type-casting to become aware of its own inherent tendency to fall out of Luther's paradoxical dialectic into a hardening of absolutes on one or the other side. For this purpose Prenter's article serves well.

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Gerhard Ebeling. *Luther: An Introduction to His Thought*. Trans. R. W. Wilson. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970. Pp. 287.

The chapters of Ebeling's book were originally lectures delivered in 1962-63 at the University of Zurich and repeated in part at Drew University in 1963. From the moment they were published in German in 1964, they were regarded as a significant achievement in contemporary Luther studies, and it seems superfluous to celebrate that achievement again